

Minute of the Sixth

Annual General Meeting

of Comann Eachdraidh Sgìre a' Bhac



29 July 2025, 7pm—Heritage Cabin

Present: Angus MacIennan (chair), Angela Maciver (treasurer), Jane Davidson (Development Officer), Kathryn Graham, Mary Ann Graham, Donald Macdonald (Tolsta/Macdonald Road), Donald I Macdonald, Coinneach MacIomhair, Murdo Macleod, Stewart Macleod, Iain Murray, Margaret Stewart, Anna Tucker, Colin Tucker.

Proxy votes: The following members were not present but elected the chair to be their proxy: Coinneach Mac a' Ghobhainn, Anne Macarthur, James Macarthur, Kevin Murray, Anne Ramsay.

The meeting was chaired by Angus MacIennan (AG). Donald Macdonald took the minutes.

Apologies

Coinneach Mac a' Ghobhainn, Anne Macarthur, James Macarthur, Kevin Murray, Anne Ramsay, Anna Tucker.

Minute of the 2024 AGM

The minute of the fifth AGM (held on 7 May 2024) was proposed as a true record by Anna Tucker and seconded by Margaret Stewart. There were no matters arising.

Chair/Development Officer's Report

The chair began by thanking the other office-bearers for their work over the year—Angela for keeping the figures and Coinneach MacIomhair for his work doing interviews and with the Wednesday club. He also thanked Jane Davidson for her work as development officer, and mentioned that Donald I Macdonald had been acting as secretary for the past few months.

He then called on Jane to deliver the chair's report. These are the highlights from it (the full text is available [from our website](#)).

- Membership
 - 235 adults and 45 juniors (juniors now counted in adult list).
- Online presence (June 2024 – June 2025)
 - Website: 36,479 visits.
 - YouTube: 21,311 views, 3,500 hours watched, 74 new subscribers.
 - Social media: 1.1K Facebook followers, 321 on X (Twitter), 94 on Instagram.

- Regular activities
 - Wednesday Group meets regularly; new large TV for viewing archive photos, sparking oral history recordings.
 - Welcomed back Seumas Smith on a student placement; music-themed projects and 2025 calendar in progress.
 - Oral history archive on YouTube growing; new interviews recorded.
 - Winter talks resumed with high attendance; notable topics included DJ Macaulay on his time in Chile, Whaling in South Georgia (delivered in Gaelic), local football memories.
- Trips & community engagement
 - Trips to Point (August) and Kinloch (December) supported by Bòrd na Gàidhlig.
- Archiving and preservation
 - Development Officer post funded by Coastal Communities Fund for another year.
 - The officer has been organising and cataloguing materials in portacabin; new donations received, including scripts from Kenny D Smith.
 - Made possible by money received from Stornoway Trust Small Community Grant.
- Media & outreach
 - Increased social media activity with weekly archive photos and crowd-sourced identifications.
 - Digitisation of old videos; one reached 1,500 views in first week.
- Future projects
 - Proposed heritage hub and exhibition space at Gress Mission House (collaboration with local groups).
 - Restoration of original land raiders' hut at 25 Gress (Crown Estate funding).
 - Intergenerational projects with Keep Scotland Beautiful and Glasgow School of Art.
- Publications
 - New book Coll Diaries in progress by Ian Quigley (follow-up to Vatisker Diaries).
 - Planned pop-up info point on 15 October for community contributions.
- Acknowledgements
 - Thanks to individuals and organisations for funding, help, and ongoing support—especially Ken Roddy Mackay of Kinloch.

Thanking Jane, AG noted that this had all been achieved despite the lack of an internet connection for the cabin. The MP, Torcuil Crichton, was now pursuing the matter with Openreach.

He added that a solicitor was currently negotiating the feu of the Gress Mission House with the Stornoway Trust, and once that had been agreed the work with Ruairidh Moir could get underway very shortly.

He drew attention to Brevig Harbour's recent donation to the comann, and noted it spoke well of the esteem in which the comann was coming to be held in the district.

Finally, he mentioned that the unified area plan for voluntary organisations showed there was definite scope for working together. Hopefully this could be finalised by next month, with a meeting of representatives from each organisation taking place shortly thereafter.

Coinneach then proposed the meeting formally note, with deep sadness, the passing of former development officer Sandra Macleod. This was seconded by Anna Tucker, to general agreement. Tribute was paid to the sensitive way AG and Coinneach had handled this exceptionally difficult situation.

Treasurer's Report

AG then called on Angela to introduce the treasurer's report.

- At the start of the financial year, the opening balance was **£31,280.47**.
- The charity's total income for the year was **£41,482.34**.
- A total of **£28,273** was received from Crown Estate Funding (for the development officer post) and **£1,800** from CNES for the student summer placement. **£6,322.81** was received from the Stornoway Trust and **£1,600** from Bord na Gaidhlig, this was for archive and preservation materials.
- A donation of **£1,949.52** was received from Brevig Regatta and **£150** was collected from winter talk donations.
- Total expenditure was **£42,996.54**. The most significant expenses were costs associated with the cabin (i.e ramp, parking bay), archive preservation equipment and the purchase of a portacabin.
- The unspent balance from the Crown Estate Funding was **£10,697.50** at the financial year end.
- The charity's closing balance in February was **£29,766.27**.

Angela highlighted the accountant's recommendation that the reserves of the charity should be increased from their current level, and said this was a target for the trustees to aim for in the new financial year.

She finished by explaining that the AGM had been delayed this year due to a bereavement at the comann's accountancy practice.

AG asked if there were any questions. Mary Ann asked about unrestricted funds. Angela replied that these were declining and suggested the organisation look at ways of building them up over the next year. AG requested that this be added to the agenda of the first board meeting.

Election of Trustees

All the current elected trustees indicated they were willing to stand for re-election.

There being no objections the meeting approved this. In addition, one new trustee was elected—Iain Murray of 9 Back.

The elected trustees formally re-appointed two co-opted trustees, bringing the total size of the board to 14 (15 being the maximum).

Election of Office-bearers

The trustees then proceeded to the appointment of office-bearers.

- **Chair:** There being no other candidates, **Angus MacIennan** agreed to serve for one more year as chair, but spoke of the need to bring in other members who could take on the role next year.
- **Vice-chairs:** **Coinneach MacIomhair** agreed to continue as vice chair. In addition, the trustees elected **Stewart Macleod** as joint vice chair.
- **Treasurer:** **Angela MacIver** agreed to serve as treasurer for another year. Coinneach thanked her (to general agreement) for her huge contribution to the society in what all agree is a critical role.
- **Secretary:** there being no other candidates, Donald I Macdonald agreed to continue as secretary for the present.

The current board for year 25/26 of the charity is therefore as follows:

- Angus MacIennan (Chair)
- Coinneach MacIomhair (Vice Chair)
- Stewart Macleod (Vice Chair)
- Angela MacIver (Treasurer)
- Donald I Macdonald (Secretary)
- Kathryn Graham
- Mary Ann Graham
- Anne MacArthur
- James MacArthur
- Murdo Macleod
- Iain Murray
- Anne Ramsay
- Coinneach Smith
- Margaret Stewart

Date of next AGM

The date of the next AGM was provisionally set for late April 2026.

There being no other business, the chair thanked all those in attendance and closed the meeting at 19:30.